

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for providing an interactive simulated dialogue over a network, comprising:
 - a client node connected to the network comprising
 - a browser for selecting a simulated dialogue program,
 - a network connection for receiving over the network a vocabulary set corresponding to the selected simulation program,
 - a client agent transmitting over the network signals corresponding to a user voice input,
 - a client buffer agent receiving over the network signals representative of a meaningful response to the user voice input, and
 - an output component for outputting an audiovisual representation of a human being speaking the meaningful response; and
 - a server coupled to the network comprising
 - a database containing vocabulary sets, wherein each vocabulary set corresponds to a simulated dialogue program,
 - a server launch agent receiving over the network the selected simulated dialogue program and transmitting over the network the vocabulary set corresponding to the selected simulated dialogue program,

a server agent for receiving signals over the network corresponding to the user voice input and for determining a meaningful response to the user voice input, and

a server buffer agent for transmitting over the network signals representative of the meaningful response.

2. The computer network of claim 1, wherein the server enables a plurality of client nodes for a single simulated dialogue program.

3. A system for providing an interactive simulated dialogue over a network, comprising:

a client node connected to the network comprising

means for selecting a simulated dialogue program,

means for receiving over the network a vocabulary set corresponding to the selected simulation program,

means for receiving user voice input,

means for transmitting over the network signals corresponding to the user voice input,

means for receiving over the network signals representative of a meaningful response to the user voice input, and

means for outputting an audiovisual representation of a human being speaking the meaningful response; and

a server coupled to the network comprising

a database containing vocabulary sets, wherein each vocabulary set corresponds to a simulated dialogue program,

means for receiving over the network the selected simulated dialogue program,

means for transmitting over the network the vocabulary set corresponding to the selected simulated dialogue program,

means for receiving over the network signals corresponding to the user voice input,

means for determining a meaningful response to the user voice input, and

means for transmitting over the network signals representative of the meaningful response.

4. A client node for connecting to a computer network including a server to provide an interactive simulated dialogue, comprising:

a client launch agent for determining a system capacity of the client node and for installing a simulated dialogue program based on the determination of the system capacity;

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means for receiving a simulated dialogue program over the network;

means for installing the simulated dialogue program based on the determination of the system capacity;

means for receiving user voice input;

means for determining the meaning of the user vocal input;

means for transmitting over the network signals corresponding to the user voice input;

means for receiving over the network signals representative of a meaningful response to the user voice input; and

means for outputting an audiovisual representation of a human being speaking the meaningful response.

8. A server coupled to a computer network including a client node for providing an interactive simulated dialogue, comprising:

a connection receiving over the network signals representative of a user voice input and transmitting over the network signals representative of a meaningful response;

a server agent for determining the meaningful response to the user voice input and for selecting a plurality of subsequent responses related to the meaningful response; and

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a buffer agent initiating a transfer of video signals corresponding to the
~~subsequent responses to the client node.~~

9. The server of claim 8, wherein the buffer agent determines network capacity for transfer of video signals corresponding to the subsequent responses, and transfers portions of video signals of each of the plurality of subsequent responses on a rotation basis based on a determination of the network capacity.

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10. ~~A server coupled to a computer network including a client node for providing an interactive simulated dialogue, comprising:~~
~~means for receiving over the network signals representative of a user voice input;~~
~~means for determining a meaningful response to the user voice input;~~
~~means for transmitting over the network signals representative of the meaningful response;~~
~~means for selecting a plurality of subsequent responses related to the transmitted meaningful response; and~~
~~means for initiating a transfer of video signals corresponding to the subsequent responses to the client node in the background.~~

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11. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a computer program for an interactive simulated dialogue, the computer program causing a computer to perform the steps of:

determining a system capacity of the computer;

receiving a simulated dialogue program from a server;

installing the simulated dialogue program based on the determination of the system capacity;

receiving user voice input;

transmitting to the server signals corresponding to the user voice input;

receiving from the server signals representative of a meaningful response to the user voice input; and

outputting an audiovisual representation of a human being speaking the meaningful response.

12. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a computer program for an interactive simulated dialogue, the computer program causing a computer to perform the steps of:

receiving from a client node signals representative of a user voice input;

determining a meaningful response to the user voice input;

transmitting to the client node signals representative of the meaningful response;

selecting a plurality of subsequent responses related to the transmitted
meaningful response; and

initiating a transfer of video signals corresponding to the subsequent
responses to the client node in the background.

13. A method of providing an interactive simulated dialogue over a
computer network, including a client node and a server, the method comprising:

receiving at the client node a signal representing a selection of a simulated
dialogue program;

transmitting, by the server to the client node, a vocabulary set corresponding
to the selected simulated dialogue program;

receiving at the client node user voice input;

transmitting, by the client node to the server, signals corresponding to the
user voice input;

determining at the server a meaningful response to the user voice input;
transmitting, by the server to the client node, signals representative of the
meaningful response; and

outputting at the client node an audiovisual representation of a human being
speaking the meaningful response.

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of enabling participation from a plurality of client nodes for a single simulated dialogue program.

15. A method of providing an interactive simulated dialogue over a computer network, including a client node and a server, the method performed by the client node comprising:

determining a system capacity of the client node;

receiving a simulated dialogue program from the server;

installing the simulated dialogue program based on the determination of the system capacity;

receiving user voice input;

transmitting to the server signals corresponding to the user voice input;

receiving from the server signals representative of a meaningful response to the user voice input; and

outputting an audiovisual representation of a human being speaking the meaningful response.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising the step of determining compatibility of a speech application engine with the simulated dialogue program.

17. The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of
receiving a compatible speech application engine from the server based on a
compatibility determination, and
installing the compatible speech application engine at the client node.

18. A method of providing an interactive simulated dialogue over a
computer network, including a client node and a server, the method performed by
the server comprising:

receiving from the client node signals representative of a user voice input;
determining a meaningful response to the user voice input;

transmitting to the client node signals representative of the meaningful
response;

selecting a plurality of subsequent responses related to the transmitted
meaningful response; and

initiating a transfer of video signals corresponding to the subsequent
responses to the client node in the background.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the initiating step comprises:
determining network capacity for transfer of video signals corresponding to
the subsequent responses; and

transferring portions of video signals of each of the plurality of subsequent responses on a rotation basis based on a determination of the network capacity.

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